

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 15, 2003 (Paper No. 9). Claims 1 to 31 are currently in the application, of which Claims 1, 10, 17, 18, 23 and 27 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As set forth above, the specification has been amended to replace the terminology of Internet mail address with Internet address (URL), which more accurately conveys this aspect of the invention. In addition, some minor grammatical errors have been corrected.

Claim 3 was objected to for an informality. In response, Applicant has amended Claim 3 to depend from Claim 2 rather than Claim 1. Withdrawal of the objection to Claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 5, 10 to 12 and 17 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,473,192 (Kidani); Claims 23 to 31 were rejected under § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,400,462 (Hille); Claims 6, 7, 9, 13, 14 and 16 were rejected under § 103(a) over Kidani in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,430,711 (Sekizawa); and Claims 8, 15, 21 and 22 were rejected under § 103(a) over Kidani in view of Hille. Applicant has considered the Examiner comments together with the applied references and respectfully submits that the claims herein are patentably distinguishable over the applied references for at least the following reasons.

Independent Claims 1, 10, 17 and 18 concern communication between an image forming apparatus and a countermeasure specifying computer. According to one aspect of the invention, when a specific event has occurred in the image forming apparatus,

the event is classified and a countermeasure specifying computer which is capable of specifying a countermeasure in accordance with the classification of the specific event is determined. Identifying information which identifies the determined countermeasure specifying computer is stored. Specific event information concerning the specific event that has occurred is sent to the countermeasure specifying computer that corresponds to the stored identifying information and an answer is received from that countermeasure specifying computer and displayed.

The applied reference is not seen to disclose the foregoing features of the present invention. In particular, the applied reference is not seen to disclose at least the features of classifying a specific event that has occurred and determining a countermeasure specifying computer which is capable of specifying a countermeasure in accordance with the classification of the specific event.

Kidani concerns a printing system which is capable of determining a type of error when an error occurs. Once the type of error has been identified, Kidani discloses notifying a connected computer of the error. Kidani is not seen to disclose determining a countermeasure specifying computer that is capable of specifying a countermeasure in accordance with the type of error. Rather, Kidani is seen to disclose notifying either the source of the printing information or a computer which is to be notified about printing information. Therefore, Kidani is not seen to disclose at least the features of classifying a specific event that has occurred and determining a countermeasure specifying computer which is capable of specifying a countermeasure in accordance with the classification of the specific event.

Hille and Sekizawa, which were applied in the rejections of certain other claims in the application, are not understood to disclose or suggest anything to remedy the foregoing deficiency of Kidani. Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 10, 17 and 18 are believed to be allowable over the applied references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection of Claim 1, 10, 17 and 18 are respectfully requested.

Independent Claim 23 concerns a peripheral device that is connected to a host apparatus. The peripheral device includes storage means for storing information on a plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet corresponding to types of problems. Output means selects one of the plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet in accordance with the types of problems which correspond to the plurality of problems that have occurred and outputs the stored information on the selected party to the host apparatus.

Independent Claim 27 concerns a host apparatus connected to a peripheral device. The host apparatus includes input means for inputting, from the peripheral device, information indicative of a plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet corresponding to a plurality of problems that have occurred in the peripheral device. Display means, which is connected to the Internet based upon information indicative of one of the plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet that has been input, displays a method of dealing with the corresponding problems.

The applied reference is not understood to disclose the foregoing features of the present invention. In particular, the applied reference is not understood to disclose at least the feature of selecting or connecting to one of a plurality of parties to be connected

through the Internet corresponding to a plurality of problems that have occurred based on information on the plurality of parties.

Hille concerns a service tool for servicing printers. According to Hille, a service tool is used to detect an error and display information about the error and a suggested fix by retrieving an HTML file from HTML files stored locally in the service tool software. However, Hille does not disclose a plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet corresponding to types of problems that have occurred on a peripheral device. More specifically, Hille is not understood to disclose selecting or connecting to one of a plurality of parties to be connected through the Internet corresponding to a plurality of problems that have occurred based on information on the plurality of parties.

Kidani and Sekizawa, which were applied in the rejections of certain other claims in the application, are not seen to disclose or suggest anything to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Hille. Accordingly, independent Claims 23 and 27 are believed to be allowable over the applied references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102(e) rejection of Claims 23 and 27 are respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are dependent from the independent claims discussed above and therefore are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Finally, Applicant cited Japan 54-56847 in the Information Disclosure Statement dated March 3, 2000. U.S. Patent No. 4,608,577, which is believed to be an English-language equivalent of Japan 54-56847, was recently discovered. Since Japan 54-56847 has already been considered and made of record by the Examiner, Applicant is not citing U.S. Patent No. 4,608,577 in an Information Disclosure Statement. However, for the Examiner's convenience and reference, a copy of U.S. Patent No. 4,608,577 is enclosed.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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